

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BONN 08494 081839Z
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R 081825Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8345
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION USNATO
USNMR SHAPE

S E C R E T BONN 08494

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-L
TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, UR, GW
SUBJECT: SOVIET DIPLOMAT COMMENTS ON THE BREZHNEV VISIT

1. AN OFFICER OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY HERE HAS GIVEN US
THE FOLLOWING ANALYSIS OF THE BREZHNEV VISIT:

-- OFFICIALLY, IT IS THE SOVIET VIEW THAT THE MOST IMPOR-
TANT RESULT OF THE VISIT IS THE SERIES OF DOCUMENTS THAT
IT PRODUCED. HOWEVER, HIS OWN PERSONAL OPINION IS
THAT THE MOST SIGNIFICANT THING ABOUT THE VISIT IS THAT
IT TOOK PLACE AT ALL. IN CONTRAST WITH THE 1973 VISIT,
WHEN THERE WAS GENUINE ELAN IN GERMAN-SOVIET DETENTE,
THERE ARE NOW MANY DIFFERENCES OF OPINION WHICH ARE MORE
OBVIOUS THAN BEFORE. THE FACT THAT BOTH COUNTRIES STILL

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BONN 08494 081839Z

WANTED SUCH A VISIT IN THAT CLIMATE, AND WERE ABLE TO
CARRY IT OFF, SHOWS THE STABILITY OF THE RELATIONSHIP.

-- THAT STABILITY IS CRUCIAL TO SOVIET ATTITUDES. IT
WAS THE BASIC ELEMENT IN BREZHNEV'S DECISION TO MEET
WITH OPPOSITION LEADERS AS WELL AS GOVERNMENT FIGURES.
THE SOVIET EMBASSY DOES NOT REGARD IT AS LIKELY THAT THE

OPPOSITION WILL COME INTO POWER IN BONN IN THE NEAR FUTURE. HOWEVER, THE EMBASSY DOES REGARD SUCH A DEVELOPMENT AS POSSIBLE. IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A STABLE COURSE IN THE RELATIONSHIP, THE SOVIETS WANT TO HAVE TIES TO THE OPPOSITION AS WELL AS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

-- THE SOVIETS WERE PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED BY STRAUSS' REMARKS AFTER THE MEETING WITH BREZHNEV. (STRAUSS STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD RELATIONS, DESPITE DIFFERENCES, AND SAID A CDU/CSU GOVERNMENT WOULD TRY TO CONTINUE THESE RELATIONS.) THERE HAD BEEN SOME QUESTION IN THE EMBASSY ABOUT THE WISDOM OF A MEETING WITH STRAUSS, BUT THE EMBASSY NOW BELIEVES THAT THE MEETING WAS USEFUL AND SUCCESSFUL.

-- THE 25 YEAR ECONOMIC AGREEMENT IS ANOTHER ELEMENT SPELLING STABILITY AND CONTINUITY. NOBODY ON THE SOVIET SIDE HAS ANY ILLUSIONS THAT IT WILL BE EASY TO DEVELOP ALL ASPECTS OF A LONG TERM ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP, BUT THE VERY FACT THAT SUCH A RELATIONSHIP HAS BEEN AGREED PROVIDES STABILITY TO BONN-MOSCOW TIES.

-- THE SOVIET EMBASSY HERE IS PARTICULARLY PLEASED THAT THERE WERE NO ARGUMENTS ABOUT BERLIN, AND THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO CONFRONTATION ON THE SUBJECT FOR SOME TIME. THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN STRESSING TO MOSCOW THAT A CALM
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BONN 08494 081839Z

BERLIN SITUATION IS ESSENTIAL TO FURTHER PROGRESS IN GERMAN-SOVIET RELATIONS. IT IS PLEASED THAT THINGS IN BERLIN HAVE GONE WELL.

-- EVEN THOUGH A LOT OF DIFFERENCES OF VIEW REMAIN BETWEEN BONN AND MOSCOW, THE BREZHNEV VISIT HAS HELPED TO GENERATE A POLITICAL FRAMEWORK IN WHICH THOSE DISPUTES CAN BE MORE SUCCESSFULLY CONTAINED. THE RELATIONSHIP WITH GERMANY IS INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT FOR MOSCOW, NOT ONLY IN EUROPE BUT IN TERMS OF SOVIET INTEREST ALL OVER THE WORLD. THE SOVIETS WISH RELATIONS TO REMAIN GOOD.

2. IN PASSING, THE SOVIET DIPLOMAT CONFIRMED THAT AMBASSADOR FALIN WOULD NOW BE LEAVING BONN. HE DID NOT YET KNOW WHO MIGHT BE FALIN'S SUCCESSOR. HE DID NOT SPECULATE ON THE POSSIBILITY THAT IT MIGHT BE LAPIN, WHO HAS BEEN MENTIONED IN THE WEST GERMAN PRESS AS A POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR.
STOESSEL

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